

leadership, Stephen and I led his colleagues conducted a months-long effort to expose mismanaged care of our veterans and a scheme at some VA facilities to falsely report wait times, covering up the fact that veterans were waiting months for delayed care. The investigation resulted in top leadership changes and disciplinary action against multiple VA administrators and an audit to weed out those who were lying about the treatment of our country's veterans. That commitment to finding and exposing the truth was an invaluable quality when Stephen was asked to combine his experience on the Hill with his law degree and serve at the U.S. Department of Justice.

When President Trump tapped Senator Sessions to be his Attorney General, Stephen was appointed and confirmed by the Senate as the Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legislative Affairs. This achievement, which very few people can claim, was the culmination of over a decade of thoughtful service and leadership—built on a deep understanding of how Congress works. In this role, Stephen expertly managed the Department of Justice's relationship with Congress through often-contentious periods. He oversaw the Department's response to countless oversight investigations, congressional and confirmation hearings, and even several congressional subpoenas.

Every Senator relies on their staffs, and I had to build one from the ground up. This was a difficult task, but I knew with Stephen Boyd at the helm, he would ensure we got the right people in the right places. A devoted Washington Nationals Fan, Stephen describes a Senate office like a baseball team. It takes everyone collectively executing their individual jobs to win the game. And Stephen made sure each member of our staff had what they need to execute their role on our team. Deliberate, decisive, and always fair, that is how our staff describes Stephen. He kept the team calm, but motivated. He never notched today's win at the expense of tomorrow's victory. There was always a new solution to consider to a problem, and tough situations tended to look better in the next morning's light.

From the very first day, Stephen instilled a culture of integrity, inspiring our team to maintain a focus on doing what is right on behalf of the people of Alabama. The only "thanks" he worried about getting was a thank you from a constituent whose life we made a little better by helping them. For these first 2 years of my term—arguably the most formative years—Stephen was at the center of every decision and every action we have taken on behalf of the State of Alabama. And one singular question was his guiding light: "Is it good for the people of Alabama?"

This was especially true when it comes to our office's work on the Senate Armed Services Committee. Ste-

phen traveled around the State, the country, and the world to see our military in action. He focused on how we can use our position on the Armed Services Committee to support the military footprint in Alabama and our men and women in uniform. Stephen pushed us to take a listen-first approach—to ask our military leaders what they need and to actually listen to those requests. Thanks to his leadership, we secured authorization of funding for a number of projects important for the future of our national defense capabilities. Some of these include: new barracks at Ft. Rucker, missile defense projects, the construction of more ships in Mobile, a new physics lab at Redstone Arsenal, and a new commercial vehicle inspection area at Maxwell Air Force Base. And we even secured the No. 1 request from our No. 1 commander in the Indo-Pacific region that had gone ignored for years: a missile defense system for Guam.

Stephen was also a great support as Huntsville readies to become Space Command's home in the next few years. He led the staffs of the Alabama congressional delegation to have a united front in supporting this transition and ensured our office maintains near-constant communication with the Huntsville community and defense industry to ensure a smooth transition. Once again, Stephen's approach to work—ask first, work diligently behind the scenes, and do what is right for the people—was an effective way to get things done. These are just a few examples of how Stephen's leadership had external success.

But what people won't see are the daily moments of impact he had on our office. Stephen was a trusted and reliable adviser. You ask a question, and he will shoot you straight, even if you don't like the answer. And for me, his trustworthiness and transparency were invaluable these past 2 years. He worked to ensure I had all the information, from all sides of the argument, in order to make a final decision. And at the end of the day, Stephen always had the people of Alabama in mind.

Stephen didn't spend the last two decades of his career trying to gain acclaim. He quietly worked in the background to help improve the lives of Alabamians. And I have no doubt he will continue with that sense of service in his next endeavors.

Our office will greatly miss his steady hand and calm leadership. But we know public service is not just a burden of time and effort borne by the servant. I also want to thank Stephen's wife, Breckie, for her constant support.

So, Stephen, thank you for your service to our office, the State of Alabama, and to our country.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO MARK GORDON

• Mr. BLUNT. Madam President, I rise today to recognize my good friend,

Mark Gordon, who will be retiring from his position as the president of the Missouri Broadcasters Association next year after almost a decade of distinguished service. Mark has been a broadcaster for over 40 years. He started his career as a copywriter and an announcer before moving on to being a newscaster and then switching to the advertising sales side of the business. Before agreeing to helm the MBA, Mark spent 10 years running television stations in Springfield, MS, my home town, which is where we first met each other.

Mark moved to Springfield to work for KY3 in 1997, shortly after I came to Congress. In a lot of ways, our professional careers have been intertwined ever since. He has been a tireless advocate for local Missouri communities and Missouri broadcast stations and has been a trusted voice on their behalf for as long as I have known him. Whether we were working together on spectrum issues, satellite television re-authorizations, or public service campaigns, Mark has always been a person I could rely on. And between seeing him back home in Missouri at one of his members' stations or on one of his numerous visits here to Washington, DC, I have always appreciated his advice and how he always worked on behalf of the communities we both serve.

I remember the meeting in my office almost 10 years ago where Mark and his predecessor, Don Hicks, let me know that Mark would be taking over the reins of the MBA. Don Hicks had served as the head of the Missouri Broadcasters for decades and left large shoes to fill. I can honestly say that Mark not only filled those shoes but also has left his own legacy on our home State and a high bar for whoever succeeds him.

Mark's proud legacy also lives on through his son Mike, who has made significant contributions in his own right to Springfield's broadcasting industry.

I wish Mark, his wife Lucy, their children Jaime and Mike, and their entire family nothing but success in this next chapter of his life. Forty years is a long time, and he has seen, and been part of, so much change in his industry. I am proud to have been able to call him my friend for the last 25 years, and I know that whatever he decides to do next he will continue to be a tremendous asset to his community and our State.●

RECOGNIZING THE HILLIARD ART MUSEUM

• Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I rise today to congratulate the Hilliard Art Museum on being awarded accreditation by the American Alliance of Museums. This accreditation offers an industry stamp of approval to the museum, recognizing the hard work of the Hilliard Art Museum team and the support of the Lafayette community.